

**Silver Spring
Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
January 10, 2013**

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Abbreviations:

T&E = Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy & Environment Committee

TOD = Transit Oriented Development

Item 1,2 & 3 – Introductions/Minutes Review/Chair’s Comments: **Andy Wexler** asked for updates to be given first to accommodate the presenter, who was expected later.

Sgt. Tom Harmon announced:

- For the year 2012 there were 36,206 citations given, and there were no pedestrian fatalities in 3rd District. This is due to good first responses and hospitals; congestion and red light cameras slowing down traffic
- **Sgt. Harmon** said he will be retiring in June and hopes to have a replacement assigned to the Committee.
- Vehicles must stop behind the white line at an intersection to prevent activating red light cameras.

Sandra Brecher announced:

- Data regarding Red Light cameras is available on the County website.
- The County is still negotiating the bikeshare contract with Alta Bicycle Share. It will take four to six months for the equipment to arrive.
- The budget appropriation hearing on bikeshare will be January 15. Ms. Brecher directed attention to the Committee’s letter urging Council to approve the appropriation. Full Council vote on the appropriation is expected on January 27..
- Special meeting of the.-The position formally held by **Gail Tait-Nouri** on the Pedestrian, Bike, and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee has been upgraded and will soon have a replacement. Progress on meetings will be followed.

Members and guests introduced themselves after the arrival of presenter **Sarah Kline**.

Item 4 – Presentation, Reconnecting America: **Mr. Wexler** welcomed **Sarah Kline** from Reconnecting America, a non-profit organization which builds “complete communities” through transit oriented development (TOD). The organization has three offices in different cities with a staff of 15. **Ms. Kline** said she heads the Washington, DC office which works on Federal policy regarding transit issues. They also work with research partners to obtain information on transit development and Federal policy issues.

Reconnecting America recognizes the need for transit connectivity within communities as a first priority, then broadening out to facilitate access to education, housing, healthcare, and food for a quality of life.

TOD is defined as a neighborhood with ½ mile of transit if walking, and three miles if biking. Research shows that people are five times more likely to use transit if they are within these distances. Other elements of TOD:

- Mix of uses of development, with a variety of retail, office and residential space.
- Mix of housing choices to accommodate a range of incomes, and housing near transit.
- Walkable areas must feel safe and be well lit.
- Connection to other modes of transit must be available.
- Public spaces for civic and public events help create a sense of community.

Ms. Kline explained that even though TOD communities are generally more expensive in upfront costs, they are economically more efficient in the long term. Other benefits:

- Creates economic development and revitalizes the community.
- Improves health and safety.
- Provides environmental benefits.
- Households save money. Homes not near transit have higher transportation costs than those near transit.
- Businesses near transit have better employee productivity and better sales.

Ms. Kline said the need to locate housing near transit is so strong that every new unit of housing would need to be built near transit from now until the year 2050 just to meet demand. There are more than 600 planned TOD projects nation wide; however there is not adequate funding available. The Federal Map 21 program provides only \$8.5 billion a year, while the total cost of current and future transportation projects is \$250 billion; with \$24 billion just to keep existing systems running. State and local matching funds only cover \$17 billion.

Other issues discussed:

- Gas tax does not provide adequate funding for transit projects – there has been no gas tax increase since 1993.
- The complexity of the major Federal program for building transit is being streamlined to make generating data easier to fund new projects, and measuring how projects will stimulate economic growth.
- Making sure attention is focused on transit connectivity – fixed bus networks to reach small communities not located near transit.
- Finding the right approach to transportation funding, such as a carbon/oil tax and vehicle miles travel tax (low public support).
- Broadening the tax base to help pay for transit using developer fees, zoning codes.
- Policies not supportive of TOD – parking requirements and business community push-back regarding the use of their parking spaces for transit oriented initiatives (i.e., car and bikesharing).
- Education about how to be successful in creating complete communities. Metropolitan areas are graded based on progress.
- Advisory Committee action to support TOD initiatives – presentations, conveying information to public officials, such as County Council and the County Executive.
- The use of earmarks to fund transit projects.
- The importance of public space as part of a TOD, and creating a sense of community.

More information is available on the Reconnecting America web site:
www.reconnectingamerica.org.

VOTE: December's minutes were approved with changes.

Item 5 - County Executive Letter / Final: **Mr. Carlson** presented the final version of the Committee's letter regarding the opening of the Ripley Street access to the Metropolitan Branch Trail and the MARC platform. According to **Tim O'Gwin**, Montgomery County Dept. of General Services, the pathway is almost ready for use, but there were still some outstanding issues:

- Lighting of the station canopy.
- Grounding of the metal hand railing.

An additional letter (approved at December's meeting) urging Council to adopt the bikesharing appropriations bill will be circulated to the Committee for additional input. There will be a public hearing on the bill Tuesday, January 15; the Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy & Environment (T&E) Committee will review on January 17, followed by Council action. Written testimony can be submitted – appearing in person is not necessary. It was suggested that the chairs of the Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Board and the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board be copied on the letter.

Item 6 – Updates:

- January 29: County Executive Budget Forum in Silver Spring
- January 14: Joint community meeting in Silver Spring with Councilmember **Valerie Ervin** and District Ward 4 Councilmember **Muriel Bowser**.

Adjourned

Next meeting February 14, 2013

**Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee Attendance Sheet
January 10, 2013**

Voting Members (12)			
Name	Affiliation	Present	Absent
Chamber Members (3)			
Arnetta Haines	Social and Scientific Systems	X	
Michael Meszaros	Digital Industry, Inc.	X	
Samantha Mazo / Co-chair	Linowes and Blocher LLP		X
Citizens Advisory Board Members (3)			
Jim Bunch	Kemp Mill, Four Corners, East SS	X	
Phil Olivetti	North & West Sector Plan Area	X	
Andrew Wexler / Co-chair	CBD Resident	X	
Employers less than 50 employees (3)			
Vacant			
Everton Latty	iDeal Decisions, Inc.	X	
Valerie Spencer	MayaTech	X	
Employers with 50 or more employees (3)			
G. Michael Price	Discovery Communications	X	
Vacant			
Vacant			
Non-Voting Members (3)			
Sandra Brecher, DOT Transit Services	DOT Director or Designee	X	
Vacant	M-NCPPC		
Reemberto Rodriguez	Silver Spring Regional Center	X	
Sergeant Thomas Harmon	Montgomery County Police	X	
Staff			
Nakengi Byrd	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Jim Carlson	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Guests			
Sarah Kline	Reconnecting America	X	